

Cuban Deal Private: Donovan

CPYRGHT

By RICHARD MATHIEU

The Democratic candidate for the U.S. Senate, James B. Donovan, vigorously denied yesterday that his negotiations with Cuban Premier Fidel Castro to free 1113 prisoners had any connection with U.S. Government.

Donovan, who returned Saturday from Cuba, still characterized the negotiations as "heparul" and served notice he was prepared to return to Cuba at "a moment's notice."

Private Gifts, He Says

He knocked down reports that public money would be spent in ransoming the prisoners.

"The money to buy food, medicine and other supplies," Donovan said, "will come from private gifts, not from the government."

He also vehemently denied reports that he was about to withdraw from the race against Sen. Jacob Javits.

Donovan also insisted that his commitment to work for the release of the Cuban prisoners took precedence over his campaign for the Senate.

Gives Talks Top Priority

"The highest priority has to be my commitment to the Cuban families because human beings are involved," Donovan said.

Interviewed yesterday on the television "60 Minutes" program, Donovan said he wanted to make it clear that his public commitment (the negotiations) I understood happened long before this political situation (the campaign) took place.

He was asked whether he could turn over the Cuban negotiations to someone else.

He replied: "I've given con-



(News photo by Tom Watson). James B. Donovan makes television statement.

right now might upset the talks.

Donovan termed President Kennedy's stand on the Cuban situation as "magnificent." He insisted that he had not discussed the Cuban negotiations with the President, but he did say that he had kept the federal government informed of progress.

siderable thought to that. I don't think it's possible."

He said the negotiations have been on a personal basis between himself and Castro and that substitution of another negotiator